

Preliminary Amendment

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For: VARIABLE VALVE APPARATUS AND METHODS

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 25, with the following amended paragraph.

Although various constructions of illustrative embodiments are described below, sample processing devices of the present invention may be similar to those described in, e.g., U.S. Patent Application Publication Nos. US 2002/0064885 A1 (Bedingham et al.); US 2002/0048533 A1 (Harms et al.); US 2002/0047003 A1 (Bedingham et al.); and US 2003/0138779 A1 (Parthasarathy et al.); as well as U.S. Patent No. 6,627,159 B1 (Bedingham et al.). The documents identified above all disclose a variety of different constructions of sample processing devices that could be used to manufacture sample processing devices according to the principles of the present invention.